

Minutes, WT Task Force Against Discrimination, January 4, 2022, 5 p.m. APPROVED on Feb. 1, 2022

Present: Omar Johnson, Susanna Sturgis, Terry Kriedman, Brad Cortez, Loren Ghiglione, Jessica Seeman, Ted Jochsberger

Omar called the meeting to order @ 5 p.m.

Accessing Zoom Recordings

Recordings of our meetings are posted on the town website, where they aren't publicly available. Susanna will talk with Molly Conole at the West Tisbury church to see about uploading them to YouTube, where they could be made available either publicly (to anyone) or privately (to anyone with the link). Given the weirdness that can happen with public access, we'll explore the latter option.

Resources Available Through the Library

Alexandra wasn't here so this was deferred to our next meeting.

Availability of Town Funding

No town funding for the TFAD is currently available, and it's too late to submit budgets to the finance committee (fincom) for the next fiscal year. Loren noted that if we come up with a project that requires funding, we can consider submitting a request. Cathlin suggested that several town task forces or their equivalent could submit a collaborative proposal to, e.g., MV Community Foundation. *[SJS note: As I noted later in the meeting, it seems unlikely that we have a counterpart in any island town, with the possible exception of Oak Bluffs. Would someone like to do a little investigating about this?]*

Diversity of Town Boards and Committees

This wasn't on the agenda but spun off from the previous agenda item, and Loren had raised the matter earlier in an email. He proposed emailing board and committee members about their age, race, sex, and other characteristics. etc. Questions were raised about whether this was legal and whether people would be willing to answer.

Cathlin proposed asking "How are you working to diversify your boards & committees?"

Ted suggested that contacting the board and committee chairs would be a good place to start. He thinks that obtaining data is necessary.

Terry said that we should start with West Tisbury. There was general agreement about this.

Loren will draft a list of questions to be asked and email it to us, and we'll discuss at our Feb 1 meeting.

Follow-up with M.V. Nonprofit Collaborative

Cathlin screen-shared [this page](#) from the Collaborative's website as an example of the programs they offer. These programs are open to all. [Robin Stacia](#), whom Cathlin knows through Ebenezer Baptist Church, will be offering more programs in the coming year. The West Tisbury church is working to put programs together around conflict resolution for the congregation but these will be open to others. *[SJS: Check out the Sage Consulting Network website, link just above. Dr. Stacia is impressive!]*

Town Website Page Follow-up

Omar reported that we can use our page on the town website. Direct link: <https://www.westtisbury-ma.gov/diversity-task-force>. When we want to add something we go through Janice Haynes. We can use it to promote both our own activities and events of interest sponsored by others.

MV Diversity Coalition Follow-up

Susanna hasn't been able to make contact with Sandy Pimentel or someone else from the Diversity Coalition but will keep trying.

Resource List Follow-up

Susanna will compile this. The idea is to include specific go-to info for town bodies: town hall, library, school, police force, etc. What is the procedure for (1) employees and (2) the public who have a complaint or comment? Other resources include the M.V. Mediation Program and NAACP MV's Legal Redress Committee.

We need to agree on what goes into the list. Cathlin suggested using Google Docs to collect suggestions and links. Susanna will set up a Google Doc through our Gmail account. *[SJS note: Done on Jan. 6. Everyone should have received a "share" link by now. If you have any questions, ask!]*

Approval of Minutes for Dec. 7 Meeting

These were approved after a suggested edit was made to the draft. *[SJS note: Sent to Janice for posting on Jan. 6.]*

Warrant Article for Housing Bank

Susanna reported that this would be coming up at the selectboard meeting the next day (Jan. 5). Some people have been sticking on the idea of a stipend for Housing Bank advisory board commissioners, on the theory that they should be volunteers. This connects to the issue of diversity and inclusion because it tends to exclude younger people, working people, longtime Vineyarders, etc., with the result that most (all?) boards and committees skew older and whiter. She plans to attend and urges others to do so if they can.

Next meeting: Feb. 1. Susanna will send around an agenda reminder a week in advance.

The meeting adjourned at 5:56 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Susanna J. Sturgis, Recorder